

EXHIBIT 2

Clarkstown acquiring land to stop proposed church

Robert Brum, The Journal News

Published 1:48 p.m. ET Nov. 2, 2017 | Updated 5:30 a.m. ET Nov. 3, 2017



(Photo: Carucha L. Meuse/The Journal News)

Clarkstown is spending \$235,000 to buy land and stop a controversial plan to build a church on a rural stretch in Valley Cottage.

The 4.3 acres off Mountainview Avenue will be turned into nature trails that connect to the Long Path and integrated into Mountainview Nature Park, Supervisor George Hoehmann announced Thursday.

The purchase brings to an end St. Peter's Syro-Malankara Catholic Church's request to build a two-story, 10,925-square-foot building and a 55-space parking lot on the property.

Phone and email messages left for church representatives were not immediately returned Thursday.

CLARKSTOWN: Catholic church development 1st to face new law (/story/news/local/rockland/clarkstown/2017/05/05/clarkstown-catholic-church-overdevelopment/101194558/)

CLARKSTOWN SUPERVISOR'S RACE: Candidate questions (/story/news/local/rockland/clarkstown/2017/10/27/clarkstown-supervisor-race-candidate-questions/794869001/)

The church's proposal earlier this year was met by fierce opposition from residents who said it was not suited for the residential neighborhood, would increase traffic and have a negative impact on wetlands.

The town's purchase will protect 2.357 acres of wetlands, according to a press release issued Thursday.



Valley Cottage residents Christina Huber and Ed Mooney talk about how they do not want the church to build on a vacant lot off of Mountainview Avenue in Valley Cottage May 3, 2017. (Photo: Carucha L. Meuse/The Journal News)

The church also was facing a new town law that limits requests for non-residential uses and developments to state and county roads.

"Today's agreement is another bold step in protecting Clarkstown from overdeveloping in residential neighborhoods while protecting the quality of life our residents demand and deserve." Hoehmann, a Republican seeking re-election on Nov. 7, said in a statement.

Dan Caprara said his fellow Town Council members supported the purchase.

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"One of the biggest parts of the comprehensive plan is to preserve the suburban and semi-rural character of the town, and purchasing this property accomplishes that," said Caprara, a Democrat running to represent Ward 2, which includes Valley Cottage.

"A two-story, 11,000-square-foot structure is just not suitable for Mountainview Avenue, period," he said.

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Tina Traster, founding member of the Mountainview Avenue Preservation Group, called it "a special road that should be protected from the impacts of future development and our members could not be more excited about the open space we have to look forward to."

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